

I can Do It

CURATED BY SYNONYM + MITSUNORI KIMURA

Exhibition: 2022.11.23. (wed) - 2023.7.12. (wed)

Preview: 2022.11.22. (tue) 5PM - 8PM RSPV only

Artist: Mitsunori Kimura

Venue: GROWING SPACE, Batting LALALA Midori
458-0801 Aichi, Nagoya, Midori Ward, Narumicho, Kakitsubata - 92

Curator's Letter

How many times have you walked into a museum or any art exhibition, acrimoniously looking at an abstract, minimalist painting or any other works, and thought this to yourself: "I could have drawn that," or "My 6-year-old can do better."

I Can Do It Too! tweaks that sentiment and reinterprets it into a playful exhibition that may perhaps remind the audiences of a world of RPG, presenting 56 works in total, from sculptural artist Mitsunori Kimura in collaboration with 50 children and 6 other adults, including 3 professional artists. The exhibition's title is a direct reference to a children's book published in 2003 of the same name by Karen Baicker and Ken Wilson-Max, the book illustrates the childhood independence and maturity of a little girl, imitating and trying her hands on everything that the grown-ups around her do - putting on clothes all on her own, baking a cake and even learning to play the guitar, and most importantly the book goes to show the beauty of love from adults to a child when growing up.

Continue diving further into the theme of coexistence from the previous exhibition *GROWING SPACE* (2022) – an Aichi Triennale 2022 partnership event, in *I Can Do It Too!* SYNONYM co-curates with artist Mitsunori Kimura, exhibiting the fruits from three art workshops that took place in Batting LALALA Midori, led by the artist back in August. During these sessions, children and adults from both the local community plus Sakura Kids International, were guided to create their own imaginary living creatures using commonly found domestic materials. Without giving out too many directions when the participants were making their works, instead the artist chose to leave things open, letting everyone run wild with their creativities, the sensitivity of a child shows toward our reality and surroundings, the pursuit of pure and raw imagination once again demonstrates the infinite possibility of human beings.

Drawing inspirations from nature and the animals themselves, *I Can Do It Too!* is divided into three distinctive islands of habitat for living creatures: Titled *Everyone's Island* (2022), we would like to present an installation work newly created by Mitsunori Kimura specifically for this exhibition, this centrepiece is composed of two separate islands, sitting above ground as if it has got a life to its own, intricately crafted by the artist designated for all the creatures living in the sea and roams around the land of grass and soil – “It belongs to the creatures that live on the island, it belongs to us who are looking at it, it belongs to the island itself,” says Kimura; Turning to the area of Jinko, the audience may find a treehouse lookalike installation with creatures residing on top, imagining a world of everything human-made, including human themselves; Right next to Jinko we have Sora, one may easily relate this section to the open sky where you would find works resembling dragon and god, hanging above from the ceiling. The exhibition design was created with an easy-to-understand approach for children, we hope to provide an immersive experience that serves both educational and inspirational purposes for all adult and children visitors, that they will be able to enjoy the exhibition in an exploratory manner. Also as a part of the exhibition, the children at Sakura Kids International also contributed to the creative process of graphic design and illustration.

Due to the fact that children created a large part of the exhibited works, undeniably there's a disparity that lies between the quality of the final outcome, compare with the works created by professional artists, nonetheless, it was essential for us to treat the works of children's like any other artworks, making the collaboration within the space between the curator, the artist and the children genuine, in an attempt to convey the importance of art during a troubling and uncertain time, by exhibiting children's work from the workshops we hoped to explore the nuanced relationship between contemporary art and children in turn drawing the distance closer. Despite that the exhibition is buoyant and jolly on a surface layer, the exhibition isn't just meant to be 'kawaii', beneath that layer there's a subtext raising questions about the upbringing of a child, empowering the creativity of children with a renewed sense of confidence for them to engage and interact with this constantly changing and evolving world, while it also acts as a reminder to all the parents and adults that, on many occasions exceeding our expectations, the children can actually do it.

Mitsunori Kimura

Mitsunori Kimura (b. 1983) was born in Shizuoka, Japan. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts in sculpture from Nagoya Zokei University. After graduating with a Master's degree in Fine Arts majoring in Environmental Art from the same university in 2007, Kimura has actively participated in group exhibitions not only in Japan and Asia but in Europe as well, including Biennale de Lyon 2017, meanwhile the artist has also held solo exhibitions in Japan and Korea throughout the years.

Kimura is a sculptor who creates works by wood carving and oil paint modelling, he picks up the motifs of his works from daily moments and unexpected intimacy — curious, childlike and playful — at first glance, many of Kimura's works share a humorous and amusing aspect to them. Enchanted by animals and inspired by artists like Katsura Funakoshi and Georg Baselitz, as well as animalism omnipresently developed around the 5th and the 6th century ancient Japan, the artist works exclusively with the material of wood, the final outcome of the work ultimately depends on the characteristics of the material. In 2015, Kimura started experimenting with a unique carving method on the surface of wood using a chainsaw, as if actual hair is growing out of the wooden panels or sculptures, this is not an intent to reflect on the transience of life but instead, it alludes to the obscurification of the intermediate, or rather, the liminal state between life and death.

In September 2020, while participating in an artist residency program at Kamoe Art Center in Hamamatsu, Japan, impacted by COVID-19, *Breathe* (2020) was born — an ongoing sculptural project that evolves around various species of animals and the idea of 'breathing' — a simple yet complicated process undertaken by the lungs of both human and animal, in an attempt to explore deeper into our coexisting relationship with animals under the current social climate.

In July 2022, as a part of the Aichi Triennale 2022 Partnership event, at the exhibition of *GROWING SPACE* (2022), further expanding on the vocabularies of this work series *Breathe* (2020), Kimura has turned our heads to saiga, a critically endangered antelope that's not found in Japan, whose outstanding feature noticeably is perhaps its large nose, that serves to warm and moisten inhaled air during winter while cooling it down during summer. The artist has chosen to work with hinoki this time, a type of wood on the other hand, that's widely available here in the country. By bringing saiga to our attention and drawing the distance closer to this sacred creature, Kimura does not only remind us that we, along with the animals, are all involved in the natural cycle of breathing, but the artist also ponders on what it means to exist and to live as a human being, questions what fundamentally lies within the relationship between humans, animals and nature in a contemporary human-centre society.

About SYNONYM

SYNONYM is an online and offline network project space focusing on community-based storytelling. We are directors, curators and producers of art and design projects as well as exhibitions, from conception to realisation, we aim to bridge and to expand the horizons of the commercial, niche and cultural sectors.

Established in both Nagoya, Japan and London, UK, the underlying connotation behind our name 'SYNONYM' implies that despite all the individual differences we are all similar one way or another, on this constantly evolving platform, we would like to take you along a journey starting from Japan, presenting a curation of ideas and objects.

In a parallel universe simultaneously, SYNONYM also publishes an online journal celebrating travel and cultures. Acting as a catalyst, we initiate dialogues with creatives, artists, gallerists and designers in the field of art, fashion, craft, design and more, aspired to bring exceptional creative talents all over the world together.

Contact

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GROWING SPACE

Batting LALALA Midori

〒458-0801 Aichi, Nagoya, Midori Ward, Narumicho,
Kakitsubata - 92

Tel: (052) 891 - 5151



Credit

Artist: Mitsunori Kimura

Curator: Axel Wang @SYNONYM + Mitsunori Kimura

Producer & Project Direction: Soichiro Kimura @SYNONYM

Construction: Yamanobu Construction

Graphic Design: Tracy Truong

GROWING SPACE Partner: Hémash co.,Ltd

Special Thanks: Sakura Kids International



**GROWING
SPACE**

SYNONYM

Area	Name	Title
Everyone's Island (2022) by Mitsunori Kimura	Moka Ando	うさぎ
	Sosuke Ando	へんなどうぶつ
	Seika Aoyama	みかくにん生物
	Sora Hashimoto	アルパカ
	Mana Hattori	ねこたこ
	Mikoto Honma	ねこ
	Honoka Ikegaya	うさ
	Machi Ishida	うさぎの親子
	Reon Ito	でぶひすじ
	Kohei Iwaki	毛むくじゃらのゾウとそのエサ
	Shinji Iwaki	うみのスピノサウルス
	Shihori Kawai	かわいい子ざめ
	Hayato Kimura	ただの魚
	Haruki Matsuzaki	海でおよいでふカメ
	Soichiro Miura	Untitled
	Akari Morine	自然に帰る帰宅途中のハリネズミ
	Sumire Morine	風車の下のきつね
	Yutaro Mukai	へんな魚
	Rintaro Nakai	進化したハリネズミ
	Taishin Nakai	かめ
	Yuna Nakao	しっぽさかな
	Rei Oiwa	かわいい子ざめ
	Mebuki Okuyama	冬の日のねこ
	Mutsuki Okuyama	まっ白白すけ
	Eri Sakakibara	うさぎ
	Naoki Sakakibara	みかくにんせいぶつ
	Yuri Sakakibara	無題
	Ayato Sano	ほおじろざめ
	Rihito Sato	コケのカマキリ
	Sosuke Sato	かめ
	Toa Shimodaira	みみのないうさぎ
	Ayumi Shinno	かわいい子ねこ
	Riku Sonoda	ぞう
	Nanami Tahara	はずかしがりやのふわうさぎ
	Fuka Tanaka	もじゃもじゃくん
	Lin Tanaka	かめ
	Karin Tsuge	かわいい子ざめ
	Koharu Usubuchi	白色のこあら
	Kaho Watanabe	ふわうさ
	Haruki Yokohama	ハッピーしろくま

Area	Name	Title
Jinko	Yusei Enomoto	ロボット
	Kanta Fuji	Biiiiisu
	Mio Gonya	ちゃんまげのおふわふわ
	Tomomi Gonya	モフモンブラン
	Yuya Iwaki	かきごおり
	Kohei Saito	バッター
	Asuna Sano	無題
	Kyutaro Tanaka	BOSS
	Asahi Taniguchi	目がついてるかきごおり
	Masamune Sugino	おおもりれしゃ
Sora	Yuki Matsuura	ぞうがりゅうになった
	Yoshiyuki Morine	GOD OF FOREST
	MUGA	#俺最強
	Hiroto Saito + Noriko Wada	ぶきりゅう
	Akiko Suzuki	ゆにこんくらひちゃん